For that the Holy Scripture is in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin, & that these three languages, because of the Holy Scripture, are called Holy; and also for that the title of the Cross of our Lord Jesus, which I have seen in Rome in the Church of Santa Croce, is written in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin, I have placed these three sorts of letters—that is, Hebrew, Greek, Latin—first; and of these three, the Hebrew letters first of all, because they are said to be the most ancient, & to have been invented by the first men, as historians have discovered.

After these three will come the French letters in at least four varieties, that is to say, *Cadeaulx, Forme, Bastard,* and *Tourneure.* Besides all these divers sorts & shapes there will be the Chaldaic letters, and thereafter, the Arabic, the Fantastic, the Imperial and Bullatic, and, finally, the Eutopic, and the Floriated, with the method of making ciphers of intertwined letters, as you will be able to see clearly hereafter one after the other, in their order.

To come then to our first letters, which are the Hebrew, it is necessary for you, first of all, to observe & know that they must be read in the opposite way from the Greek, the Latin, and the French; for we must read them to the left, & backward; that is to say, we must begin to read at the end of each line and read back to its beginning. You must know that the Hebrews have twenty-two letters in sound, but of characters they have twenty-seven; for five of the said twenty-seven are doubled, and yet they have & keep the same sound in pronunciation, although they are represented by different characters. By these five, the beginning, the middle, & the end of words is variously written. Furthermore, we must observe that all the Hebrew letters are consonants, and to represent our five vowels, A, E, I, O, & V, the Hebrews use twelve kinds of points, which are called in Latin *Aspices,* or *Puncta,* by means of which and of the said twenty-seven characters the whole Hebrew language is composed.

In the Hebrew language, then, there are twenty-two letters, which are named and called as follows: *Aleph, Beth, Gimal, Daleth, He, Vau, Zain, Heth, Teth, Iod, Caph, Lamed, Mem, Nun, Samach, Aain, Pe, Sadic, Coph, Res, Sin, Tau.*

Aleph is the name of A; *Beth,* of B; *Gimal,* of G; *Daleth,* of D; *He,* of the aspirate H; *Vau,* of V; *Zain,* of Zeta; *Heth,* of Ch; *Teth,* of T; *Iod,*

of I; *Caph,* of C; *Chaph,* of Ch; *Lamed,* of L; *Mem,* of M initial, and the other *Mem,* of M final; *Nun,* of N initial, and the other *Nun,* of N final; *Samach,* of S medial; *Aain,* of A; *Pe,* of P; *Phe,* of Ph; *Sadic,* of S medial; the second *Sadic,* also of S medial; *Coph,* of C; *Res,* of R; *Sin* of S, sometimes initial and sometimes medial and sometimes final, according as it is over the first or the last part of one of the two points called, one *Scholeth,* and the other *Ceboleth;* as you can plainly see at the beginning of the grammar of Brother Ximenez de Cisneros, Cardinal of Spain, Archbishop of Toledo, and Chancellor of Castile.

Of these twenty-seven letters there are, as I have said before, five which have two characters each, namely, *Sadic, Phe, Nun, Mem,* & *Chaph,* & thus all the Hebrew letters make twenty-seven different characters. These five double letters are always used at the end of words, and the other five, which are the same in name & different in shape, are used at the beginning & in the middle of words, but are never placed at the end.

Of these twenty-seven letters there are four which are pronounced with the lips, and these are *Beth, Vau, Mem,* & *Pe.* There are five which must be pronounced with the teeth: *Zain, Samach, Sadic, Res,* and *Sin.* There are five others which must be pronounced with the tongue: *Daleth, Teth, Lamed, Nun,* and *Tau.* There are four which must be pronounced with the palate: *Gimal, Iod, Caph,* & *Cof* [*ph*]. There are four others which must be pronounced with the gullet: *Aleph, He, Heth, Aain.* Observe further that among the twenty-seven letters there are four which are similar in design to four others, & for this reason you should be careful not to be deceived by their resemblance. These four are *Beth, Gimal, Vau, Mem,* which resemble *Caph, Nun, Res,* and *Samach.* Which, although they are in some degree different in name & sound, yet they have this difference between them in their shape: the first four tend toward a quadrangle and a half quadrangle, and the other four toward the circular and semi-circular shape.

The names of the points heretofore mentioned which serve as vowels are these: *Pathach, Cames, Hatheph pathach, Cere, Cegol, Seba, Hatheph segol, Hiric, Holem, Hatheph cames, Surec premier,* & *Surec segond.* They are twelve in number, of different names and different shapes, but there are three which serve for A: *Pathach, Cames, Hatheph pathach.* There